

Hilgert would move to return the bill for a specific amendment. The amendment is on page 1867 of the Journal. (AM4242.)

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Senator Hilgert, you're recognized to open on the motion to return.

SENATOR HILGERT: Yes, thank you. I wish to return this from Final to Select for a specific amendment, and that amendment is the reduction of the state and local bingo tax. The bingo tax is the highest charitable gaming tax. Keno is only 2 percent of lottery gross proceeds. Pickle cards is 2.5 percent of pickle card... card gross proceeds, while bingo is 8 percent, adding the 6 percent of the state and 2 percent of the local. The share of the bingo tax revenue in relation to total charitable gaming tax revenue is disproportionate to its share of total charitable gaming dollars wagered. The percentage of gaming dollars wagered on bingo is 5.7 percent. The percentage of state gaming charitable gaming tax revenue raised from bingo is 14 percent, and a percentage of charitable gaming tax revenue from bingo is 17.9 percent. The reason I wish to return this, the last time we had a vote on this, there was only a...there was less than 30 members in the body. We had...it was 12 to 6. We had two-thirds of the members that were present and voting, voted in the affirmative to reduce the state tax on bingo, and I wanted to give the opportunity for the body to vote on this issue once again. This is my attempt. The bingo is a...it is overtaxed and it is somewhat of a loss leader, and I'm not sure that some of the members realize this. Bingo tax...the bingo game is not as profitable as the pickle cards that are sold at the bingo game. If the bingo game collapses, the pickle cards sold there also collapse. Therefore we're in a unique position whereas if we do not lower this tax, it is possible that the state may actually lose revenue because those outlets, these bingo games where pickle cards are sold, if they disappear, we will not be able to sell the pickle cards; therefore, we will not be able to get the revenue from the pickle cards sold there. So in order to preserve the revenue that's coming into the state, and not to mention all the charitable purposes that bingo and pickle card charitable gaming go to, if you're just looking at the revenue side, we're in the position whereby if we don't do something to help the bingo games, we're going to lose pickle card tax revenue. The state and the local bingo tax raises the following amounts of revenue, \$1.8 million. The state gets \$1.3 million, the city of Lincoln gets \$64,000, and the city of Omaha gets